

JUN 17 1962

Approved For Release 2000/08/03 : CIA-RDP75-00

Powers Still With The CIA

By DONALD MAY

WASHINGTON, June 16 (UPI)

Four months after he walked to freedom across a Berlin bridge, former U2 pilot Francis Gary Powers remains an obscure figure around Washington, glimpsed occasionally, talked of more frequently, but always avoiding the public spotlight.

The 32-year-old pilot, whose unsuccessful 1960 espionage flight over Russia toppled a summit meeting, has been living quietly in an apartment in suburban Alexandria, Va., generally unnoticed by most of his neighbors.

He is working for the Central Intelligence Agency at duties which are undisclosed, but which apparently do not include flying.

HE IS REPORTED writing a book on his flight, which ended deep inside Russia, his trial and 21 months in a Soviet prison, and his eventual exchange for convicted Soviet spy Rudolph Abel.

With a few exceptions Powers has gone quietly about his business without publicity since his appearance before a Congressional committee.

Powers said that one exception was when he visited Pope's Creek near the little town of La Plata, Md., he was discovered and people lined up to get his autograph.

Another exception was in late April when his wife Barbara was taken to Georgetown University Hospital here with an acute stomach ailment which the hospital diagnosed as a "medication reaction." Police said she had taken an overdose of sleeping pills.

CIA Director McCone, has been attempting to have the agency show up somewhat less in the press than did his predecessor, Allen Dulles.

All the CIA will say about Powers is that "he works for us."

This attitude undoubtedly stems also from the fact that though the general story is known, there still are quite a number of undisclosed aspects of the U2 flight.

The CIA gave Powers full exoneration for his conduct during his flight and at his Soviet trial. It found he had "lived up to the terms of his employment and instructions."

HE WAS GIVEN \$50,000 back pay, and the Internal Revenue Service ruled he could spread the taxes on this over two years.

But no one has ever completely cleared up publicly the mystery of how his plane was brought down.

Soviet Premier Khrushchev told the Russian people it was done with "a remarkable rocket."

Powers in his Senate testimony said he did not know the answer. His first sign of disaster, he said, was when he "heard and felt" an explosion and saw an orange light.

Then his plane was falling in a spin, and after a struggle against the forces of gravity, he bailed out without being able to start the mechanism which would have destroyed the plane after he left it, he testified.

25X1A